

Impact of Teacher Participation in Recognition Programs on Career Advancement Opportunities in Pantukan North District

Maricar M. Dansigan¹

¹Graduate School, Master of Arts in Educational Management, Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc., Davao City, Philippines

ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT
Article history: Published: August 2026 Keywords: Recognition Programs Career Advancement Teacher Participation Leadership Activities Primary Education	This study examined how teacher participation in recognition programs affects career advancement opportunities for primary grade teachers in the Pantukan North District, Davao de Oro, Philippines. Although recognition programs are in place in the education sector, their impact on the careers of teachers, especially at the primary level, is not fully understood. A quantitative research design was employed, involving full-time public school teachers with two or more years of experience at the primary grade level. A multistage random sampling technique was used, and through proportional allocation, individual teachers were selected using random computer generation. Slovin's formula was applied to achieve a statistically representative sample. The research instrument was piloted and subjected to reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha to ensure its consistency and validity. It was found that active participation in recognition programs has a significant positive influence on career advancement opportunities, such as chances for promotion, leadership positions, and additional training. Participation in leadership activities within recognition programs was the most influential area for career growth. A range of teachers' backgrounds and experiences contributed to a representative and nuanced understanding of these relationships. The study found that recognition programs that were well-designed and easily accessible validated teachers' contributions and fostered motivation, engagement, and mobility in the teaching profession. Thus, programs that recognize teachers and promote participation in leadership activities are vital to career advancement in primary education.

1. Introduction

Recognition is a powerful motivator in any profession, and teaching is no exception. Recognition programs, which acknowledge and reward the contributions, achievements, and dedication of teachers, have become common features of the education sector. These programs range from formal awards and commendations to opportunities for professional visibility and leadership. Their underlying premise is that valuing teachers strengthens motivation, engagement, and ultimately the quality of instruction they provide. Beyond their motivational value, recognition programs may also serve as gateways to career advancement. Participation in such programs can position teachers for promotion, leadership roles, and further professional development. For primary grade teachers in particular, who form the foundation of the education system, the availability of clear pathways to career growth is essential for sustaining commitment and professional fulfillment. Yet the connection between participation in recognition programs and actual career advancement is not always well understood, especially at the primary level.

In the Pantukan North District of Davao de Oro, recognition programs are in place, but their impact on the careers of primary grade teachers had not been systematically examined. Questions remain as to whether and how active participation translates into concrete advancement opportunities, and which forms of participation matter most. Addressing these questions is important for ensuring that recognition programs fulfill their potential not only as motivational tools but also as instruments of professional growth.

This study was therefore conducted to examine the impact of teacher participation in recognition programs on career advancement opportunities among primary grade teachers in the Pantukan North District, and to identify the areas of participation most influential to career growth.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

This study sought to answer the following questions:

- What is the extent of teacher participation in recognition programs among primary grade teachers?
- What is the extent of career advancement opportunities available to these teachers?
- Does participation in recognition programs significantly influence career advancement opportunities?
- Which areas of participation in recognition programs most significantly influence career advancement?

1.2 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to benefit the Department of Education, school administrators, teachers, and future researchers. For policymakers and administrators, the results provide evidence for designing recognition programs that meaningfully support career advancement. For teachers, the study clarifies how participation can translate into professional growth. For researchers, it contributes local evidence on the link between recognition and career advancement in primary education.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Recognition Programs in Education

Recognition programs are structured initiatives designed to acknowledge and reward the efforts, achievements, and contributions of educators. They take various forms, including performance awards, commendations, professional showcases, and opportunities to lead initiatives. Grounded in motivational theory, recognition serves to satisfy fundamental needs for esteem, competence, and belonging. When teachers feel valued, they tend to exhibit greater motivation, job satisfaction, and engagement. Well-designed and accessible recognition programs are therefore regarded as important tools for teacher retention and morale.

2.2 Career Advancement of Teachers

Career advancement in teaching encompasses opportunities for promotion, assumption of leadership positions, and access to professional development and training. Advancement is important not only for individual teachers, who seek growth and fulfillment, but also for the education system, which benefits from a motivated and continuously developing workforce. Barriers to advancement, such as limited opportunities or unclear pathways, can diminish motivation and contribute to attrition. Conversely, clear and attainable advancement opportunities can strengthen commitment and professional aspiration.

2.3 Linking Participation and Career Advancement

A growing body of literature suggests that active participation in professional and recognition activities can enhance career advancement by increasing visibility, building competencies, and signaling commitment. Participation in leadership activities, in particular, may develop the skills and reputation that position teachers for advancement. However, the strength of this link depends on how recognition programs are structured and how accessible they are. This study contributes context-specific evidence on which forms of participation most strongly influence career advancement among primary grade teachers.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design to examine the influence of teacher participation in recognition programs on career advancement opportunities. The design enabled the measurement of participation and advancement and the analysis of the relationships between them, providing an objective basis for identifying the areas of participation most influential to career growth.

3.2 Respondents and Sampling

The respondents were full-time public school teachers with two or more years of experience at the primary grade level in the Pantukan North District. A multistage random sampling technique was employed, and through proportional allocation, individual teachers were selected using random computer generation. Slovin's formula was applied to determine a statistically representative sample size. This rigorous, probability-based procedure supported the representativeness and generalizability of the findings, while the range of teachers' backgrounds and experiences contributed to a nuanced understanding of the relationships examined.

3.3 Research Instrument

Data were collected using a structured survey questionnaire measuring teacher participation in recognition programs and career advancement opportunities. To ensure the quality of the instrument, it was piloted and subjected to reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha, confirming its internal consistency and validity prior to full administration.

3.4 Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher secured the necessary permissions from district and school authorities before administering the questionnaires. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents, who were assured of the voluntary nature of their participation and the confidentiality of their responses. Completed questionnaires were retrieved, screened for completeness, and encoded for analysis.

3.5 Data Analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed. The Mean determined the extent of participation in recognition programs and career advancement opportunities. Correlation and Regression Analysis were used to determine whether participation significantly influences career advancement and to identify which areas of participation are most influential. The level of significance was set at 0.05.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were observed throughout the study. Participation was voluntary and based on informed consent, and respondents retained the right to withdraw at any stage. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained through secure handling of data, which were used solely for the purposes of this research.

4. Findings

4.1 Extent of Teacher Participation in Recognition Programs

The first objective determined the extent of teacher participation in recognition programs. As shown in Table 1, participation was high, with an overall mean of 4.28. Among the areas of participation, participation in leadership activities obtained the highest mean (4.41), followed by professional showcases and awards (4.30), training and development activities (4.24), and performance commendations (4.17). These results indicate that primary grade teachers in the Pantukan North District actively participate in recognition programs, with particularly strong involvement in leadership-oriented activities.

Table 1: Extent of Teacher Participation in Recognition Programs

Area of Participation	Mean	Descriptive Level
Leadership Activities	4.41	High

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Professional Showcases and Awards	4.30	High
Training and Development Activities	4.24	High
Performance Commendations	4.17	High
Overall Participation	4.28	High

Source: Research Data, 2026

4.2 Extent of Career Advancement Opportunities

The second objective examined the extent of career advancement opportunities available to teachers. As presented in Table 2, career advancement opportunities were high, with an overall mean of 4.21. Opportunities for additional training registered the highest mean (4.32), followed by opportunities for leadership positions (4.20) and opportunities for promotion (4.11). This pattern suggests that while teachers perceive strong access to professional development, formal promotion opportunities are comparatively more limited.

Table 2: Extent of Career Advancement Opportunities

Dimension	Mean	Descriptive Level
Opportunities for Promotion	4.11	High
Opportunities for Leadership Positions	4.20	High
Opportunities for Additional Training	4.32	High
Overall Career Advancement Opportunities	4.21	High

Source: Research Data, 2026

4.3 Influence of Participation on Career Advancement

The third objective tested whether participation in recognition programs significantly influences career advancement opportunities. As shown in Table 3, the analysis yielded a coefficient indicating a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between participation and career advancement ($p < 0.05$). This means that as active participation in recognition programs increases, career advancement opportunities likewise increase. The null hypothesis of no significant influence was therefore rejected, affirming that active participation in recognition programs meaningfully supports career advancement.

Table 3: Relationship Between Participation in Recognition Programs and Career Advancement

Variables	r-value	p-value	Decision
Participation in Recognition Programs and Career Advancement	0.66	0.000	Significant

Source: Research Data, 2026

4.4 Areas of Participation Predicting Career Advancement

The fourth objective identified which areas of participation most significantly influence career advancement. As presented in Table 4, the regression analysis revealed that all areas of participation significantly influence career advancement ($p < 0.05$). Notably, participation in leadership activities emerged as the strongest and most influential predictor of career advancement, confirming that leadership-oriented involvement is the most consequential form of participation for career growth. Collectively, the areas of participation accounted for a substantial proportion of the variance in career advancement opportunities.

Table 4: Regression Analysis of Participation Areas Predicting Career Advancement

Predictor Area	Beta	p-value	Decision
Leadership Activities	0.34	0.000	Significant
Professional Showcases and Awards	0.24	0.006	Significant
Training and Development Activities	0.21	0.011	Significant
Performance Commendations	0.18	0.022	Significant

Source: Research Data, 2026

4.5 Discussion

The findings collectively demonstrate that primary grade teachers actively participate in recognition programs, perceive strong career advancement opportunities, and that participation significantly and positively influences advancement. The prominence of leadership activities, both as the most engaged-in area and the strongest predictor of career advancement, is the central insight of the study. This convergence indicates that leadership-oriented participation is especially consequential for professional growth, likely because it builds visibility, competencies, and the reputation that position teachers for promotion and expanded roles. The comparatively lower means for promotion opportunities also suggest that while recognition and development are accessible, the translation of participation into formal promotion may warrant institutional attention. Overall, the findings affirm that well-designed and accessible recognition programs, particularly those that foster leadership participation, validate teachers' contributions and advance their careers.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

This study concludes that teacher participation in recognition programs is high, career advancement opportunities are high, and participation significantly and positively influences career advancement among primary grade teachers in the Pantukan North District. All areas of participation significantly influence career advancement, with participation in leadership activities emerging as the most influential. These findings affirm that recognition programs, especially those that promote leadership participation, are vital instruments for career advancement in primary education, validating teachers' contributions while fostering motivation, engagement, and professional mobility.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are advanced. First, higher officials in the Department of Education and school administrators are encouraged to strengthen recognition programs, with particular emphasis on embedding meaningful leadership opportunities that most strongly drive career advancement. Second, recognition programs should be made well-designed and easily accessible so that they genuinely validate teachers' contributions and reach teachers across backgrounds and experience levels. Third, given the comparatively limited promotion opportunities, institutions may examine and strengthen the pathways that translate participation into formal advancement. Finally, future researchers are encouraged to extend this inquiry by employing qualitative or mixed-methods approaches, examining additional districts and grade levels, and exploring other factors that shape teacher career advancement.

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